



England & Wales Census Records 1841-1911 & Indexes

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A census is a statistical count of the population of a country taken for the purpose of: Accurate government representation, tax collection and military purposes. Census records are one of the best ways to locate your ancestors at a given place and time.

BACKGROUND

The first government census was taken in 1801. The first census listing people by name was taken in 1841 and taken every ten years since, except 1941. Census records are released 100 years after the census was taken.

Important: Note when census taken because it will reflect a person's age as reported in the census.

1841 – June 7	1851 – March 31
1861 – April 8	1871 – April 3
1881 – April 4	1891 – April 6
1901 – April 1	1911 – April 2

RECORDS AVAILABLE AT THE FHL

- Original Census 1841-1891
- Surname Indexes
- Street Indexes
- Some part of 1801-1831 that have names

The 1901 Census is available only on:

- www.ancestry.co.uk
- www.findmypast.com
- www.genesreunited.co.uk
- www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

ORGANIZATION OF CENSUS RECORDS

Counties > Districts > Sub-districts > Enumeration Districts (area covered by enumerator in a day).

Completed forms /schedules grouped into 'bundles' or 'pieces'. Each piece assigned a Public Record Office (PRO) class number. Later filmed by piece. Search FHLC > PARISH

IMPORTANT SEARCHING POINTS

- Names may be misspelled
- Ages and birthplaces may not be accurate

- Relationships may not be expressed in terms we understand today
- Jurisdictions changed
- People may not be where expected
- Pages may be unreadable

FINDING A CENSUS AT THE FHL

- Go to FHLC > Town or Parish > CENSUS. All census years listed together in one record.
- Look in the census register. Reg. 942 X2pi [fiche 6024905 (5)]
- Use www.ancestry.co.uk (also available for your use at local Family History Centers).
- Try www.genuki.org.uk, www.census-online.com/links/England and freecen.rootsweb.com
- Try using a search engine (google, dogpile, altavista, etc.) using keywords such as your parish name or county, the word census, and the census year.
- HINT: Whenever possible, search a census index first, see strategy below.

FINDING A CENSUS - STRATEGY

Prioritized search strategies:

1. Search www.ancestry.co.uk and www.findmypast.com - indexed and has images of censuses 1841-1901
2. Search available census surname indexes in books, fiche, CD-ROM, or on other internet sites. Many indexes are in the Family History Library (1881 Census, 1851 Census – Devon, Norfolk & Warwickshire). Review them on the Computer Desktop. Use FHLC and Census Index Register binders in the reference area.
3. Search available census street indexes. FHL has indexes 1841-1891.
4. Search the microfilm or microfiche of the census itself.

SEARCH AVAILABLE CENSUS STREET INDEXES

Patrons may obtain street addresses from family letters, civil registration certificates, church records, or city directories.

- Street Index books located on wall shelves in reference area
- "Register of Towns Indexed by Street" also there. Binders arranged by census year and town and identify which volume to use for each town. Locate town/registration district within volume indicated. Locate street in alphabetical list. Write down piece and folio numbers. Go to first page in each section (separated by yellow cardstock) to obtain the film number that corresponds to the piece number.

SEARCH THE FILM OR MICROFICHE OF THE CENSUS

The 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, and 1891 are available at FHL on microfilm or fiche. To find these, go to the FHLC > Place Search > Parish > Census.

OR

An alphabetical list of place names is found in the Census register area in the books labeled "1841-1891 Census Index," Reg. 942 X2pi. The list gives the film/fiche number for each census year for each place. Folio numbers are given for the 1851 census only.

OTHER CENSUS SITES

- www.findmypast.com (\$)
- www.britishorigins.com (\$)
- www.1901census.nationalarchives.gov.uk (\$)
- www.familysearch.org (1881 free)
- www.genuki.org.uk (links to indexes)

WHY COULDN'T I FIND MY ANCESTOR?

- Spelling variations
- Date range too narrow
- Unexpected place
- Index/transcription error
- Not recorded
- Names may be misspelled
- Relationships may be expressed in ways we don't understand
- Ages and birth places may not be accurate
- People may not be where expected
- Pages may not be readable
- Parish may have been skipped when indexing
- Remember: You are smarter than the computer!